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INFO RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE
RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RUCNSAD/SADC COLLECTIVE
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000025

SIPDIS

HHS PASS TO CDC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [SENV](#) [TBIO](#) [PGOV](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: EBOLA CASES CONFIRMED IN DRC

REF: A. 07KINSHASA 1128

[1](#)B. 07KINSHASA 1121

[1](#)C. 07KINSHASA 1085

[1](#)D. 07KINSHASA 1094

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1.(U) Summary. Ebola virus, one of the hemorrhagic fevers, has been confirmed in the province of West Kasai, Democratic Republic of Congo. The confirmed cases are located in the Kaluamba and Kampungu health areas in the Mweka health zone, Western Kasai, DRC. The Ebola outbreak in the fall of 2007 (refs A-D), which killed 187 people, was mainly located in Kampungu, while this year it is mainly located in Kaluamba (adjacent to Kampungu in the same health zone). The epidemiological data, as of January 5, 2009, indicates 13 deaths have occurred, 41 suspect cases, 183 contacts to follow and 2 persons in quarantine. The first 3 specimens were confirmed by a South African lab. The first meeting at the central level to announce this outbreak suspicion was held on December 18, 2008 and meetings are currently being held on a daily basis. Formal assistance from the USG has not been requested. A warden message has been posted warning Americans of this deadly outbreak. End summary.

IT IS CONFIRMED: EBOLA

[1](#)2. (U) The first case was suspected on November 27, 2008 when a pregnant woman died of a hemorrhage after delivery in a health care facility. The investigation found that 9 of 13 people who were in contact with her died from clinical symptoms compatible with hemorrhagic fever. The first 3 lab samples were confirmed as Ebola by a South African Lab. Currently, 21 specimens are prepared to be sent to a specialized lab in South Africa and 12 are to be sent to a specialized lab in France Ville, Gabon.

GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD

[1](#)3. (U) The confirmed cases are located in the Kaluamba and Kampungu health areas in the Mweka health zone, Western Kasai, DRC. Of the 41 suspected cases, 26 are female and 15 male; these include 13 children, 25 adults and 3 with unknown ages. Geographically, 35 cases are from Kaluamba, 1 is from Mweka, 1 is from Sungi Lunene, 3 are from Kabao and 1 is from Kampungu. The Ebola outbreak in the fall of 2007, which killed over 187 people, was mainly located in Kampungu, while this year it is mainly located in Kaluamba (adjacent to Kampungu in the same health zone). (Note: The full geographic parameters of the outbreak are still not known for certain. End Note.)

LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

¶4. (U) The first meeting at the central level of the GDRC to announce this outbreak suspicion was held on December 18, 2008. Task Force meetings are currently being held on a daily basis with participation by CDC and USAID physicians in country (however, formal USG involvement has not yet been requested). Three epidemiological teams have been constituted, with one actually in the field. A team of 10 experts from the National level as well as others from WHO/Kinshasa traveled to the field on December 31, 2008. Instructions are being given to local teams on how to handle suspected cases, contacts and specimen. Specimen collection kits have been sent to local teams with instructions on specimen collection and shipment to Kinshasa. Central epidemiologists and senior lab technicians have been sent to the field. MSF has already installed a center for clinical care; UNICEF has provided communication materials to support and promote community awareness and mobilization; and, WHO has sent two vehicles and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) to the field. Churches and local organizations are involved in behavior change communication regarding Viral Hemorrhagic Fever (VHF). Due to the close proximity with the affected areas of the DRC, The Angolan government has ordered the closing of the northeastern border with DRC in an attempt to prevent the spread of the disease into the Angolan territory.

WARDEN MESSAGE ISSUED

¶5. (U) A consular warden message alerting the American public in the DRC to this epidemic and advising citizens to avoid travel to the region has been posted to the Embassy's website as well as transmitted through the traditional warden message system.

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GARVELINK